

Application No. 10/802,263
Response dated Wednesday, April 12, 2006
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Reply to Office Action of January 12, 2006
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Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 11, line 21 and ending at page 12, line 14 with the following rewritten paragraph:

Although the flexible drive members 130 may be variously configured, each of the illustrative flexible drive members 130 of FIGS. 1A, 1B and 1C includes inside and outside surfaces 131a and 131b and a first segment 132 and a second segment 134 having, respectively, a first segment profile 132p and a second segment profile 134p. Moreover, each of the illustrative drive members 130 shown in FIGS. 1A through 1C is a belt 136. Referring to the illustrative belt 136 of FIG. 1A, the second segment 134 includes a series of tooth-like protrusions 137 having distal ends 138 that engage an article for directional transition as the second segment 134 cycles through the upper cycle portion UCP. In the alternative belt 136 of FIG. 1B, the inside and outside surfaces 131a and 131b are non-toothed and relatively smooth and the belt 136 is simply continuously thicker in the second segment 134 than it is in the first segment 132. Furthermore, in the particular version of FIG. 1B, there is a tapered transition region 133 between the first and second segments 132 and 134 as opposed, for example, to an abrupt step in thickness, although versions including ~~[[that]]~~the latter are within the scope and contemplation of the invention. It will be more fully appreciated further in this description that such a tapered region 133 facilitates smoother and less abrupt package lifting. Referring to still a third, non-limiting version as shown in FIG. 1C, a belt 136 includes teeth along the inside surface 131a but is non-toothed and relatively smooth along the outside surface 131b. The teeth on the inside surface 131a are adapted for interlocking engagement with similarly dimensioned teeth depending from the belt-engaging portion of a toothed wheel 124.